

## **John Randolph Grymes to Andrew Jackson, February 15, 1843, from Correspondence of Andrew Jackson. Edited by John Spencer Bassett.**

class=MsoNormal>JOHN W. R. GRYMES TO JACKSON.

New Orleans, February 15, 1843.

My dear Sir, I received your letter of the 27th of January, and immediately proceeded to make the necessary inquiries to enable me to comply with the request contained in it. with some difficulty I succeeded in finding the Records of the District Court of the U. States for the epoch 0231 207 referred to. I have now the pleasure to enclose you the certificate of the clerk which comprises all the information that the Records of the Court afford, in addition to which I beg leave to state that I have myself inspected with great care and attention the minutes or Record of the proceedings of that Court in and about the time you mention. It appears that on Thursday the 15th day of December 1814 the Court met for the dispatch of its ordinary business. the minutes of that day are in the ordinary form and end with the adjournment of the Court to the Monday following. here the book ends, and there is no record of any session of the Court either on the day it was adjourned to, or on any other day until the 20th of feby. 1815, But on one of the blank leaves of this book, without any date and without any appearance of having been made while the Court was in session, and in a hand writing totally different from that of the preceding minutes, is the entry or memorandum which you will find incorporated in the inclosed Certificate;

This entry is to the effect that "there was a recess of the court from the 15th of Decemr. 1814 to the 20th of feby. 1815 owing to the Military Operations of the British forces against New Orleans. It was on the 14th of Decemr. 1814, that the invading British force attacked and captured the squadron of Gun Boats destined for the defence of our Coast, the news

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of this event probably reached New Orleans on the 15th or 16th or at all events before monday the 19th the day to which the Court had been adjourned and clearly shews the cause of the flight of the Judge and the failure of the Court to meet on that day. The entry in the Book is in Conformity with this idea and shews that the same Cause continued to operate until the 20th of feby. This entry altho it bears no date is in the hand writing of the man who was only sworn in as clerk of the court after it resumed its functions in feby. 1815 and it is to be presumed was made after that day and after the happening of all the events which took place between Decemr. 1814 and feby. 1815 and with the knowledge and approbation of the Judge,

Having been but a short time before the invasion the District Attorney of the U. States for the Louisiana District and a long time before and afterwards a constant attendant upon the Court as one of the Counsellors at its bar, and having had the honour to serve during the campaign as one of your Volunteer aids, my relations with the Court and the Judge on one side since and the Army on the other may be supposed sufficiently intimate to enable me to form a tolerably correct opinion as to the causes which led to the interruption of the business of the Court; I have never entertained any doubt that the court failed to continue its sessions and that the January term was lost in consequence of the absence of the Judge from New Orleans and that, that absence was caused by the near approach of the Enemy and the prospect of a Bloody Conflict for the Conquest or salvation of the City.

On the 16th of Decemr. the Legislature passed "an act laying an Embargo," which prevented the departure of all vessels boats and Barges from New Orleans and its vicinity; on the same day it passed another "Act to provide the means of enrolling all sea fareing men now in this 0232 208 state, who are not in the service of the United States." The provissions of this Act in themselves amount to a Legislative declaration of Martial law. On the 18th it passed an act "to grant delay in cases therein mentioned;" by which all Judicial proceedings were suspended; all protests of notes etc. prohibited, and all Judicial and ministerial offices forbid the exercise of their functions. All these circumstances combined show the unusual opinion then prevailing, of the eminence of the danger, the sence of

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the civil authorities of the state on that subject, and the great and unprecedented lengths they were disposed to go, incroaching on the personal rights and liberty of the citizen and suspending all the remedies guaranteed by the institutions of the country, No doubt from a deep conviction of the necessity of the case. That all these measures were most heartily concured in by the Legislative and Judicial authorities of the country and by all the true and loyal citizens I did not then, nor have I since heard a doubt expressed. Tho all these acts were not in strictness binding on the federal authorities, no one doubted then, that the Judge and all other federal authorities concured in their necessity and expediency and acted in conformity thereto.

I beg you believe Sir that the delay in Answering your letter has proceeded intirely from the difficulties I had in finding the Records of the Court at that time, and that I am on this, as I shall be on all occasions, most ready and happy to do any thing you may desire, and shall at all times take great pleasure to lend my feeble aid in exposing falsehood or misrepresentation which may be brought to bear on your most necessary, and salutary proceedings in those eventful times.

Believe me my dear Sir to be with the highest Consideration and Respect, Yours most faithfully